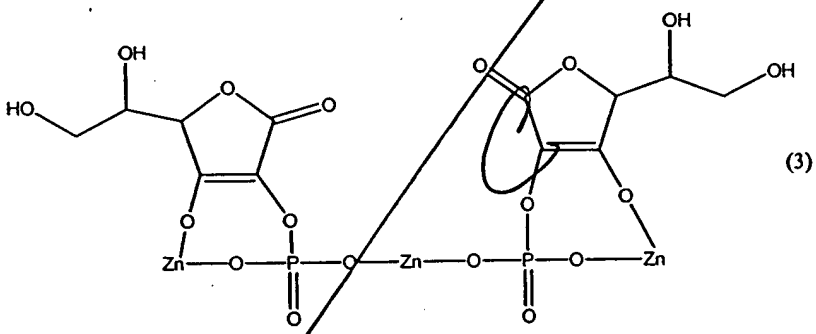
inhibitory effect on growth *of Propionibacterium*.

4. (Amended) A dermal agent according to claim 9, said dermal agent having an inhibitory effect on *Staphyloccocus*.

5. (Amended) A dermal agent according to claim 9, said dermal agent having inhibitory activity against lipase derived from microorganisms.

6. (Amended) A dermal agent according to claim 9, said dermal agent having inhibitory activity against hyaluronidase derived from microorganisms.

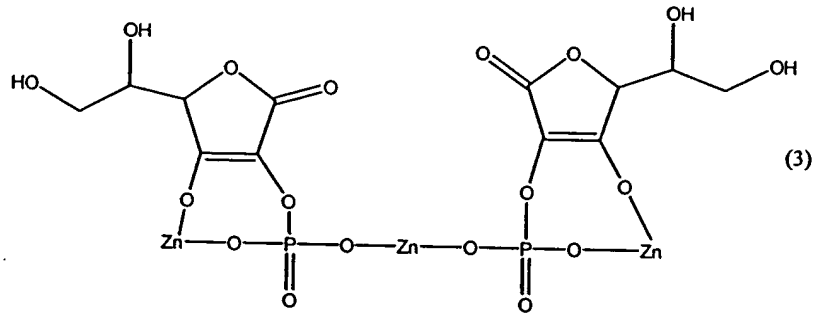
9. (Amended) A dermal agent a therapeutically effective amount of a compound which liberates ascorbic acid in vivo represented by the following formula (3):



(3)

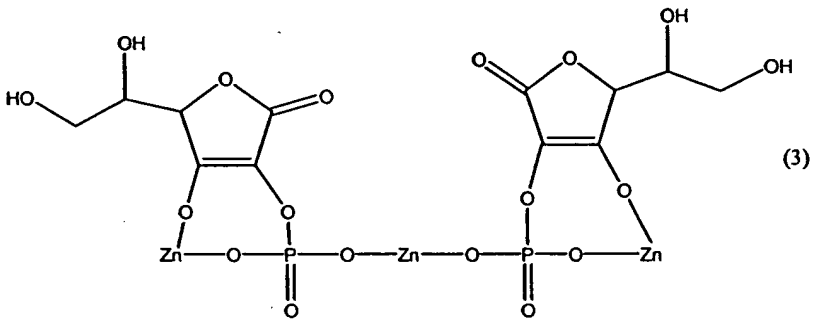
Please add the following new claims:

16. (New) A method for preventing or treating acne comprising administering a dermal agent comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a compound which liberates ascorbic acid in vivo represented by the following formula (3):



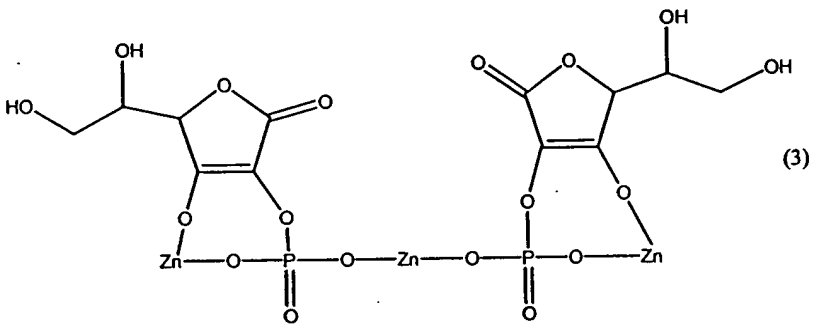
(3)

17. (New) A method for inhibiting the growth *of Propionibacterium,* comprising administering a dermal agent comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a compound which liberates ascorbic acid in vivo represented by the following formula (3):



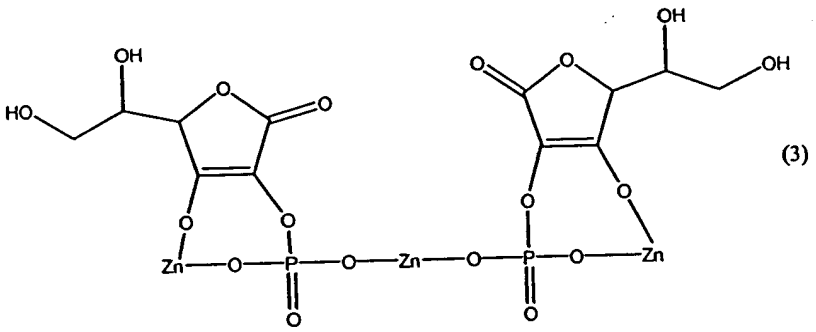
(3)

18. (New) A method for inhibiting the growth of *Staphylococcus,* comprising administering a dermal agent comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a compound which liberates ascorbic acid in vivo represented by the following formula (3):



(3)

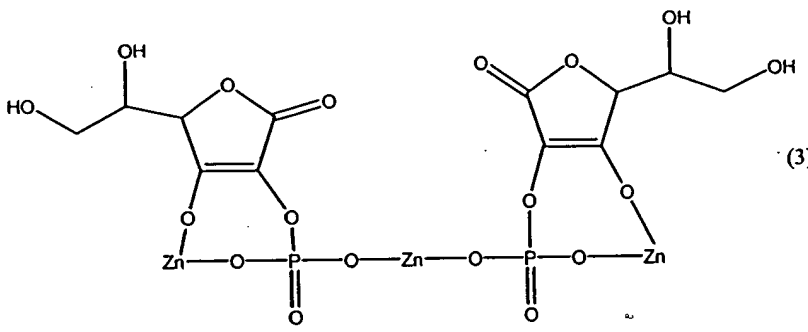
19. (New) A method for inhibiting the activity of lipase derived from microorganisms comprising administering a dermal agent comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a compound which liberates ascorbic acid in vivo represented by the following formula (3):



(3)

20. (New) A method for inhibiting the activity of hyaluronidase derived from microorganisms comprising administering a dermal agent comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a compound which liberates ascorbic acid in vivo represented by the following formula (3):

A3 cont



(3)